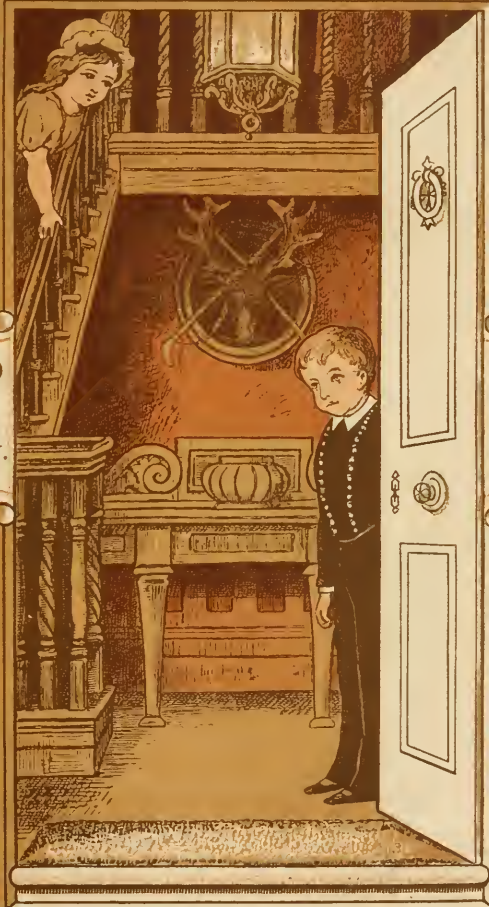
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AT HOME



ILLUSTRATED BY J·G·SOWERBY·

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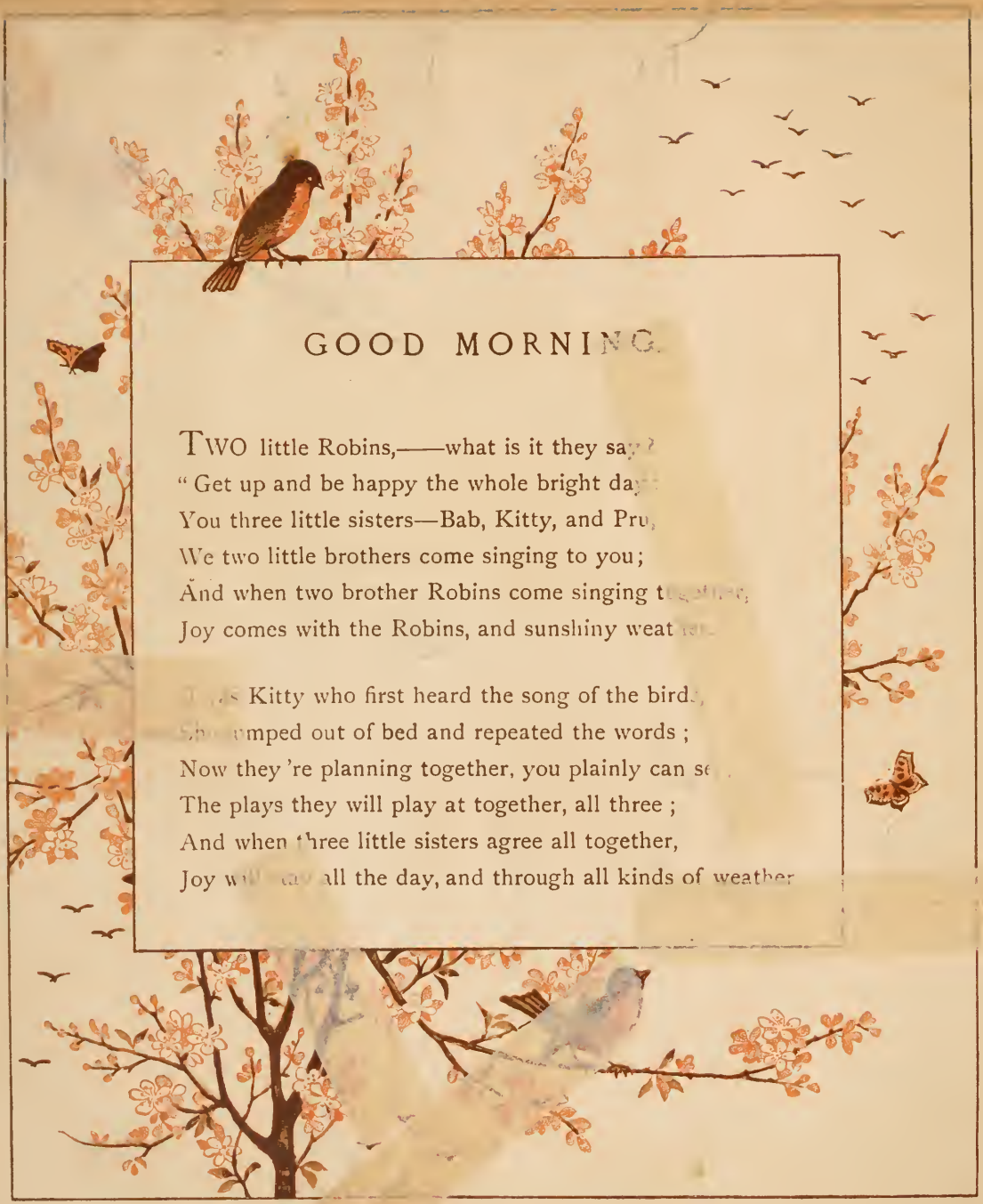
1. Juvenile Literature — Picture books, English
2. " " — Poetry, " "



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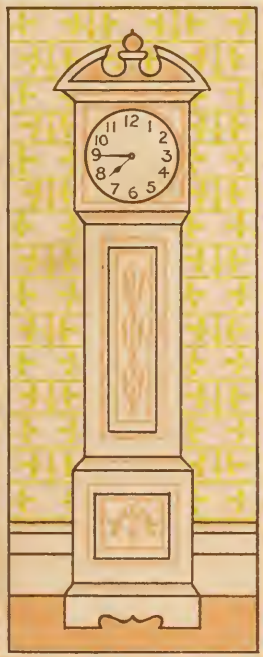
GOOD MORNING.

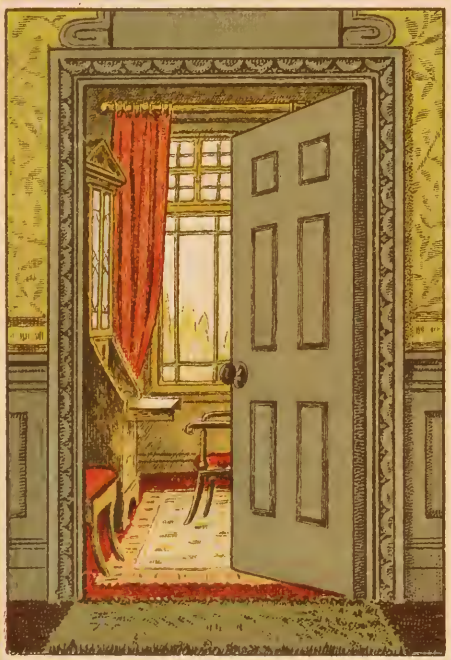
TWO little Robins,——what is it they say?
"Get up and be happy the whole bright day!
You three little sisters—Bab, Kitty, and Pru,
We two little brothers come singing to you;
And when two brother Robins come singing together,
Joy comes with the Robins, and sunshiny weather.

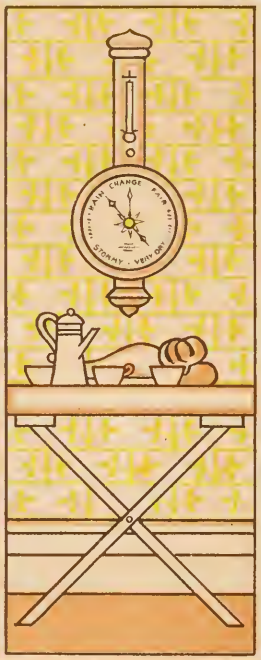
'Twas Kitty who first heard the song of the birds,
She jumped out of bed and repeated the words;
Now they're planning together, you plainly can see,
The plays they will play at together, all three;
And when three little sisters agree all together,
Joy will stay all the day, and through all kinds of weather.



SEE breakfast laid ready, the letters all come,
Rose, Geoffrey, and Pussy alone in the room.
The Library door stands ajar, we descry
Neither father, nor mother, nor anyone nigh.
Pray, how can this be? Is the whole household late?
No! the clock shows it still wants a quarter to eight;
So little Rose sits in her Mother's place there,
Whilst brother Geoff reads with a serious air—
Says sister to brother, in Mother's own way,
"Well, what have you there, dear? What news, love, to-day?"







Reads Geoffrey sedately, "State Concert and Ball"—
"Delightful," cries Rose. "Do, dear Geoff, read it all."
"Stuff and nonsense," he answers, "I certainly shan't;
The Parliament news is the thing that I want.
Ah! good, here I have it—Debate on Home Rule."
"What is it?" she asks, "some new law against School?"
"There—just like you women—so silly!" he cries.
"Oh! brother!" says Rose, with big tears in her eyes,
"That isn't like Father, one bit now, you know—
You're spoiling it all, Geoff. Please *don't* answer so,"





THE BATH-ROOM.

CRIES Tom, in the bath, "I'm a seal at the Zoo!"
Says Ted, on the rug, "Then I'm glad I'm not you!"
"Ah, but Ted," answers Tommy, "you know you 're my brother;
And if *I* am a seal, why you *must* be another!"

"TELL us all about it, please:"—
"Just a field—a group of trees,
With a river flowing by,
And low hills against the sky.

"Then upon the other side,
Upright easel, canvas wide,
Sheaf of brushes, wet and dry,
And a little artist—Guy.



"He has only just begun,
And so little yet is done,
I should find it hard to tell
If he does it ill or well.

"Let us leave him till it's done,
Artists don't like lookers-on,
Somewhere near we'll find a seat,
And perhaps some meadow-sweet."



THE GIRL IN YELLOW.

YELLOW on her head,
Yellow on her feet,
Yellow on her dainty dress,
On her girdle neat;
Yellow like a Daffodil,
Blooming fresh and sweet.

Tell me, little maiden,
How did you know
Yellow was the thing to wear;
Who told you so?
A-fashioning your new dress—
To whom did you go?

Was it Jenny Wren you asked,
Or little Tom-tit?
Was it Yellow Hammer's wing
First suggested it?
Who told you that a yellow dress
With golden hair would fit?

"Jenny Wren 's too sober
To think of such a thing;
Tom enlivens yellow
With a dark blue wing—
How could common birds know
The fashions of the Spring!"

Or was it your Canary said
(Dainty little fellow),
"Pretty maiden, follow me,
And dress *all* in yellow"?
"Yes, it *was* Canary,
Clever little fellow!"

Yellow on her feet,
Yellow on her hair,
Yellow on her dainty dress,
Yellow everywhere;
Yellow as the Daffodils,
Fresh and blooming there.

A RAINY DAY.

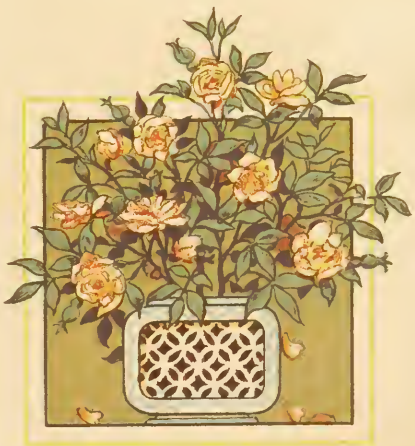


THE whole morning it rained,
The whole afternoon too;
Little Lilly complained
That it rained and it rained,
And to Edward explained
That she 'd nothing to do.—
All the morning it rained,
All the afternoon too.



Now Ned did not mind
The tempestuous weather,
For he always could find
Some food for his mind;
But Edward was kind:
See them sitting together—
Now Lill does not mind
The tempestuous weather.

"What *shall* I draw next?"
She asks every minute,
And Ned is not vexed
When she asks him "What next?"
Yet is always perplexed
About how to begin it;
He just shows her "what next,"
Almost every minute.







WANDERCHILD.

LITTLE Wanderchild there
On the cliff by the sea,
In the soft Summer air ;
Little Wanderchild there
Looks abroad everywhere,
And thus pondereth she :
Little Wanderchild there
On the cliff by the sea.

Little Wanderchild thought
She could sail to the sky
If a sea-bird she caught,
Little Wanderchild thought ;
Or a broad white sail bought
From a ship moving by :
Little Wanderchild thought
She could sail to the sky.

Little Wanderchild stands
On the cliff all alone,
She has folded her hands,
And mutely she stands ;
For, to far sunny lands
All the vessels have gone,
And still Wanderchild stands
On the tall cliff alone.



WHAT'S O'CLOCK.



"NOW help me, Léonie, in this,
I cannot guess what time it is,
Both curious clocks I 've studied well,
And still of various hours they tell:
So help me, Léonie, in this,
Say what the right time really is."

"With Dandelion seed, you see,
I tell the time," says Léonie,
"I blow and blow, and never know
How often I may have to blow;
But just the hour that comes for me,
Is the right time," says Léonie.

MILLICENT.

LITTLE pet Millicent, seated here;
Primroses round her; nobody near.

Playing by Mother's sofa to-day,
(Poor Mother is sick,) she heard her say:—

"Away in the fair green fields, I know,
My pet primroses so sweetly blow."

A tiny sigh, and two wistful eyes;
No more than that, but Millie is wise.



Without a word she has slipped away;
Mother shall have her flowers to-day.

One by one she is plucking them fast;
Till surely none will be left at last.

A pile in the basket, loosely pressed;
Mother herself will arrange them best.

So dearly she loves them—who can tell,
Perhaps they may help to make her well.

AT HOME

HERE are Cecily, Dolly, and Marjorie,
Three little hostesses, as you see.

Said Cecily first, "How pretty we look,
Like three little girls in a painted book."

Said Dolly, "'Tis hot, in the middle of June,
To stay in the house all the afternoon."

Marjorie fluttered her fan; said she,
"But our friends are coming to afternoon tea."

"Then we'll take them," said Cecily, "if they please,
A-walking and talking, beneath the trees."

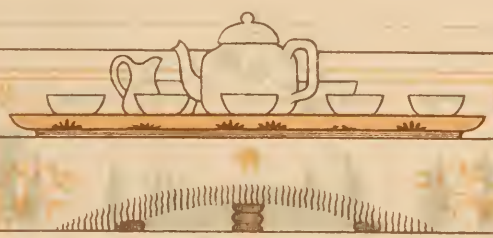
Said Dolly, "As this is our own 'At Home,'
Let us wish whom we 'd each like best to come."

Said Marjorie, fanning, the words between,
"The most of all—I should wish for—the Queen."

"No, my fairy godmother," Cecily cried,
"To deck me with jewels, and make me a bride."

Said Dolly, "I think I should like to see
The friend I love best coming in to take tea."

Cecily, Dolly, and Marjorie,
Three little hostesses, here you see.







MAID MARIGOLD.



ONE pretty tea-table,
One pretty chair,
One pretty maiden,
All alone there.
Where can her sister be?
Where is her brother?
Where can her father be?
Where is her mother?

Marigold's family,
All, I am told,
Went out together,
Left Marigold.
Won't pretty Robin come?
Mousey at least—
Pick up one little crumb?
Share in her feast?





No Mousey creeping
Under her chair,
No Robin peeping
Can I see there.—
Nor one of her family,
Came I am told,
Back to have tea with
Maid Marigold.



STRANDED.

CRIED Marian to her little ship, "Sail on, sail very far,
Across the ocean strange and wide, where desert islands are,
Perhaps a new one you will reach (who knows what may betide you?),
And find some 'Friday' on the beach, and bring him back inside you."
And trim and neat and rigged complete, Jack launched her on the sea,
She started well, but, sad to tell, no lengthened course had she.
A spiteful wind sprang up behind and laid her on her side,
Just where you see her stranded there, upon the falling tide.
The wind blew on; but brother John soon brought her safe in tow;
Some other day she 'll sail away, when gentle breezes blow.

THE FISHER BOY.

"CHRISTOPHER, Christopher, where do you go,
With your net in your hand, when the water is low;
Across the wet sand with your net in your hand,
At the fall of the tide when the water is low?"
"To wade in the sea, where the small fishes be,
A-shrimping and prawning," he answereth me.



"Christopher, Christopher, what will you do,
If the fishes refuse to be caught by you;
If the small creatures glide into sand holes, and hide,
Or swim far and wide, out to sea, from you?"
"At the edge of the sea, I shall wait patiently,
Till the shrimps and the fishes come swimming to me."

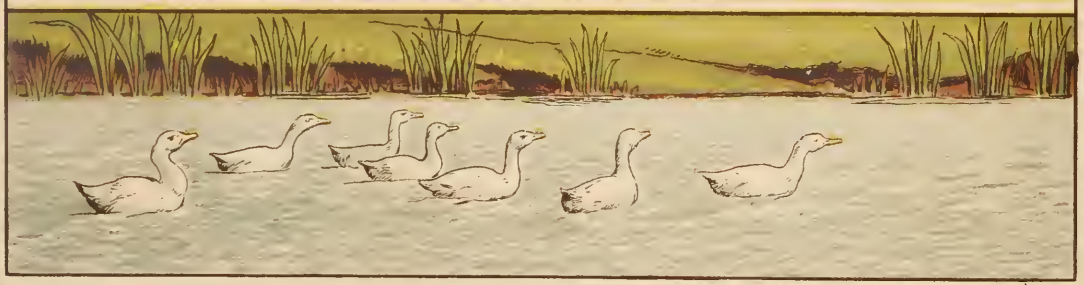
"Christopher, Christopher, tired you will get,
Sorely your arms will ache throwing the net;
When the daylight is past, and the darkness comes fast,
You 'll be hungry, and thirsty, and weary, and wet."
Brave little Christopher, boldly he goes,
Along the wet sand, where the cold water flows.

TAME DUCKS.

MRS. DUCK abroad you see,
With all her sons and daughters,
Swimming there to take the air,
And try the river waters;

Says she to her young family,
"Don't flutter so, and flurry,
No dangers hide on either side—
Tame ducks need never hurry;

The little man with little gun and bullets made of lead,
Went to the wood to shoot *wild* ducks; and he has long been dead."













WILD DUCKS.

PRETTY pair of wild ducks
Upon the water clear
To and fro, softly go,
Whilst Heron fishes near—
I wonder if they see two eyes
Peep at them where they pass,
For Humphrey sly, with gun close by,
Is crouching on the grass;
They *may* not see, but—oh! dear me!
I hope they 'll fly away,
With might and main, to come again
Quite safe another day.



POLLY.

LOOK at wise little Polly but five years old,
Yet she 's been out a-shopping, with silver and gold,
And her basket holds all that a basket can hold.

Look at brave little Poll, as she plods home again,
With her big blue umbrella, through mud and through rain,
She has two miles to go, yet she does not complain.



Her basket is heavy, as soon you would find
If you ventured to lift it, but Poll doesn't mind
Either burden, or weariness, shower, or wind.

Good speed to you, Polly, good luck to your store:
How glad you will be when you knock at the door,
And mother lets in her dear Polly once more.

Good-bye, little Poll, you are wise, I can see,
And steady and strong, and as brave as can be;
When I 've sixpence to spare, you shall spend it for me.



GRANDMOTHER NAN.



IN grandmother's spectacles, dear little Nan,
Sits rocking and knitting as fast as she can—
Pray, who are the children that Nannie has there,
One child in the cradle and one in the chair?



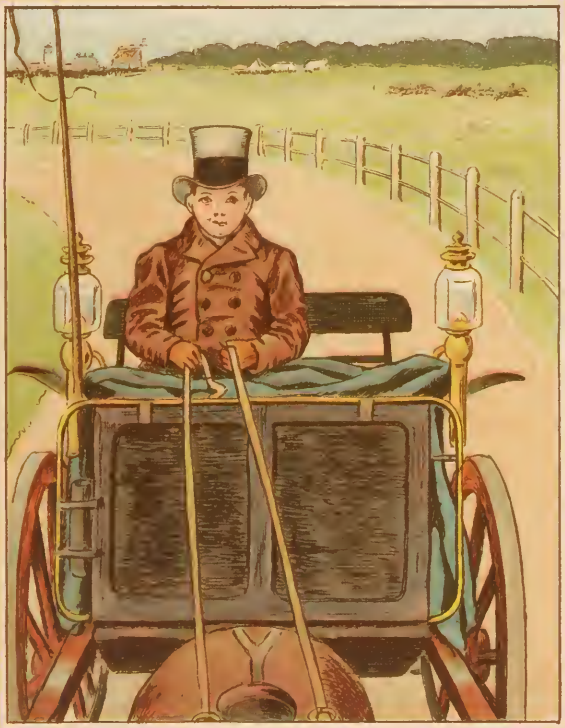


"My grandchildren, as you might see," answers Nannie:
"Augusta was naughty, she wouldn't kiss Grannie,
That is why on the high chair alone she must keep,
Whilst I rock my *good* Amy and sing her to sleep."



IT'S a race! and they're off! yes, I know;
But we've not got a moment to spare:
Poor old Tom, how he's pricking his ears!
He would gladly give both to be there.

Oh, I say!—what a jerk of the reins!
He is longing to see which will win:
I just wish he was there, he would be,
I am certain, the first to be in.



Never mind, there's a jolly old horse;
I assure you we really can't wait;
I must meet brother Jack at the train,
And it never would do to be late.

Never mind; trot along; that is right;
We must go to that station to-day;
But some other, we'll book for a race,
You and I, and just show them the way!

MABEL.

ITE three weeks, and not a show'r,
Parched the garden, hot and dry;
Drooping low was ev'ry flow'r;
Little Mabel, passing by,
Heard them whisper, "We shall die!"

Quick to save them Mabel ran,
Full of pity, full of fear;
Brought in haste her watering-can—
Is it fancy? Does she hear
Grateful whispers, "Thank you, dear"?





TRESPASSERS.

THE nursery door was left open,
So they thought they would come down the stair;
Here are Mabel and Maud at the table,
And Dorothy climbing a chair.

If she knew you were here in the kitchen,
I wonder what Nursey would say:—
"O, she 'd say we are 'terrible children,'
But she tells us that day after day."

Why such very round eyes, little Maudie?
"We are wondering, Mabel and I,
If the tart is of plums or of cherries;
If it 's chicken or meat in the pie."

O Dorothy dear, do be careful!
You will fall if you climb up like that;
Or knock down a plate, and—poor pussy!—
Cook will certainly say "it 's the cat."

Now suppose that poor Nursey has missed you:
What, Maud, do you say you "don't care"?
Just turn round your head for a moment;
Who is this with her foot on the stair?

DOT'S LETTER.

HERE'S a picture of Dot.
As she sat at her ease
With a letter she 'd got ;
A true picture of Dot :
All her cares she forgot
Whilst she read by degrees
Through the letter she 'd got,
In the chair at her ease.



"Dear Dot," it began,
"We are having 'At home'
Once a week, if we can—
So, dear Dottie," it ran,
"Fall in with our plan ;
We *so want you* to come,
'Twas to-day we began
Our new plan of 'At home.'

"There is Molly and me
And our new dolls, you know,
Whom you're certain to see ;
(You like Molly and me?)
We give plum-cake at tea,
Besides sweets when you go :—
Love from Molly and me,
That means 'Effie,' you know."



REHEARSAL.

A DUET, if you please, between Norman and Grace:
Sister Olive is player; she 's there in her place;
Tiny Grace is Soprano, and Norman is Bass.

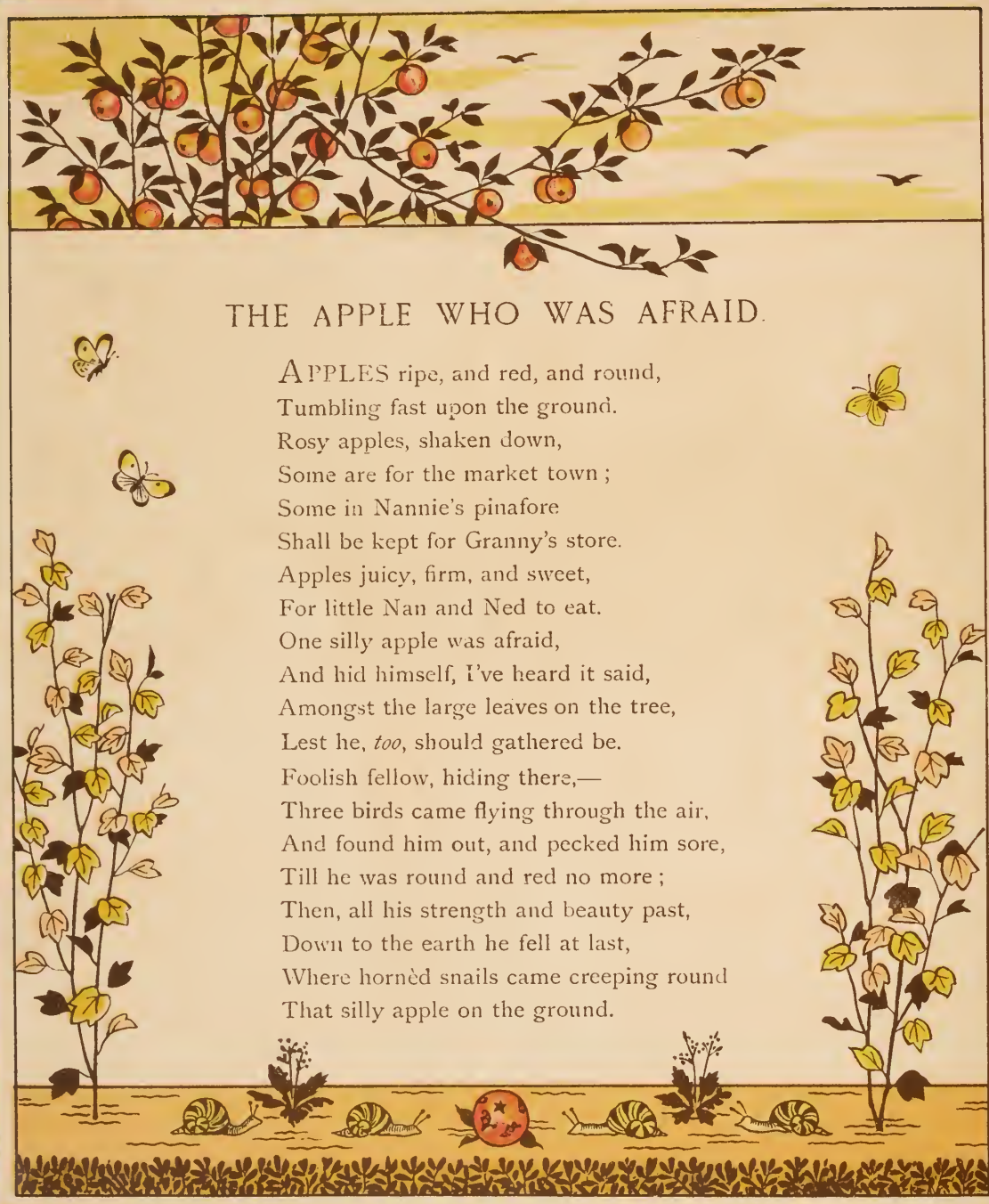
Little Grace is so eager, she cannot keep time,
But runs on ahead without reason or rhyme.

"Sing slower!" cries Norman, "it is not a race;
Still slower, Soprano! and *do* keep your place."

"It is Olive," says Gracie, "what *is* she about?
She waited too long there, and quite put me out."

"No indeed," answers Olive,—"that mark means a 'rest;'
You don't understand, Grace,—indeed I know best."

"Try again! Ah, that 's better by far than before:
Now if people were here, they would cry out 'Encore'
Which means, you know, Gracie,—'Please sing it once more.'"



THE APPLE WHO WAS AFRAID.

APPLES ripe, and red, and round,
Tumbling fast upon the ground.
Rosy apples, shaken down,
Some are for the market town ;
Some in Nannie's pinafore
Shall be kept for Granny's store.
Apples juicy, firm, and sweet,
For little Nan and Ned to eat.
One silly apple was afraid,
And hid himself, I've heard it said,
Amongst the large leaves on the tree,
Lest he, *too*, should gathered be.
Foolish fellow, hiding there,—
Three birds came flying through the air,
And found him out, and pecked him sore,
Till he was round and red no more ;
Then, all his strength and beauty past,
Down to the earth he fell at last,
Where hornèd snails came creeping round
That silly apple on the ground.



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

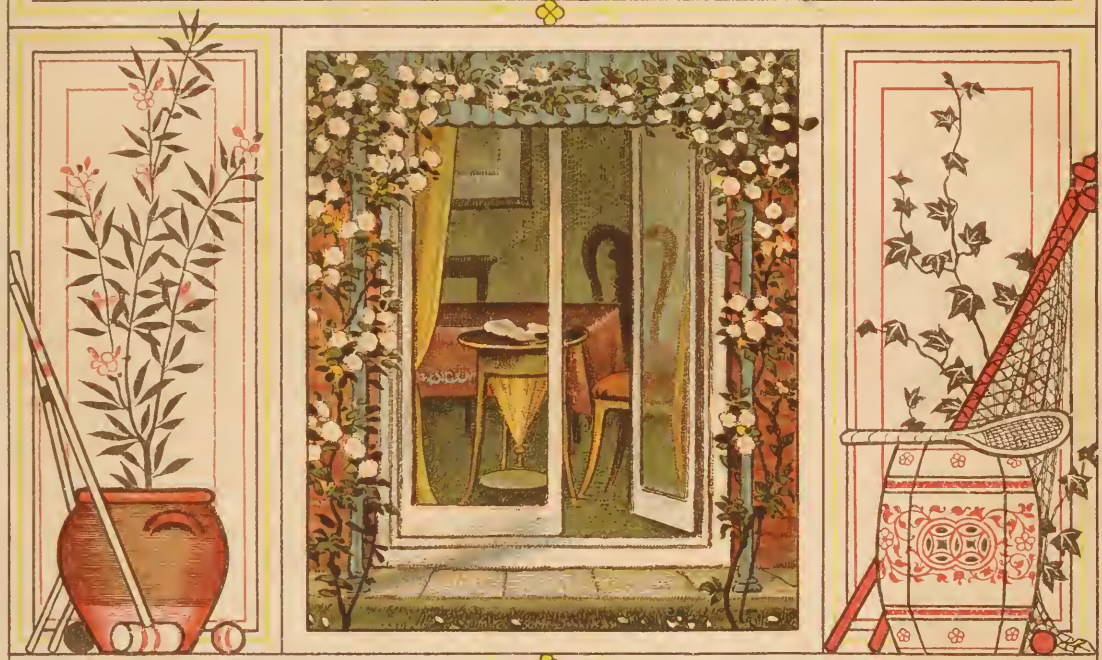
ONE Valentine's day, in the bright Spring weather,
Two young rooks were talking together.
Said one to the other, "My partner be,
Let us make up a nest in a tall, tall tree,
And share it between us." "Yes," said the other,
"You for the father, and I for the mother."
They built their nest busily, shaped it with skill,
They decked it, at last, with a gay daffodil—
Sheltered and stately, and steady, and strong,
It served them together the whole Summer long.

One Valentine's day, in the sweet Spring weather,
A boy and a girl were talking together.
Said Philip to Phillis, "My partner be,
Let me share with you, and you share with me."
Said Phillis to Philip, "And help one another,
I for the sister, and you for the brother."
Said Philip to Phillis, "Sweet cousin of mine,
Let 's be each to the other, a true Valentine!"
They made it between them, a love-promise strong,
And they kept it together, their whole lives long.

PHŒBE.

ALL the morning, all the morning,
Sat she till her tasks were done;
While without were birds and blossoms,
And the pleasant sun.

Whispered thro' the open window
Gentle breezes, passing by:—
"Phœbe, are you coming, Phœbe?
Come before we die!"



And the leaves in ev'ry rustle,
And the birds in ev'ry song:—
"Phœbe, Phœbe, are you coming?
Phœbe, don't be long!"

Till the clock, with joyful measure,
Struck the hour when work is o'er;
Saying "Ponto," Phœbe vanished
Through the open door.

WHITHER sped our nimble Phœbe?
She is in the study now;
Ponto heard her when she called him,—
Answered back "Bow-wow!"

Poor old Ponto! He is longing,
Longing for his game of play,
And the garden—ah; but Phœbe
Has a word to say.



"Ponto, tho' the birds and garden,
Called me all the morning thro',
I had first to do my lessons—
So I think should you."

"Beg, then—beg, sir—do you hear me?
No, no, Ponto, that is wrong:
Paws up! steady! ah, that's better!
Good dog, come along!"

GERTRUDE'S PATIENT.

BY the road you lay with a broken wing;
We carried you home with us, poor wee thing!

Father was doctor, and set the bone,
And said I might have you to call my own.

I did not think you would care to go,
You seemed so tame, and I loved you so.

But I watched you, Dick, at the pane to-day,
And I *felt* you wanted to fly away.

I will not keep you—you need not fear;
Still, do not forget me, Dickey dear.

Feed once from my hand in the way you know;
Then, Dickey my pet, I will let you go.



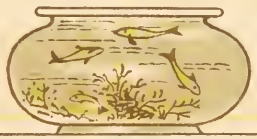
TEDDY.

TREES above; below, a stream,
Blue beneath the bluer skies;
Here and there a break and gleam,
Where the fishes rise.

Teddy, pulling off his shoes,
Shakes in doubt his curly head—
Can't decide what fly to choose,
Grey, or brown, or red.

Ah, they joked at home, and said,
Minnows were a charming fish!
"Wait until they see," thinks Ted,
"Trout upon the dish!"







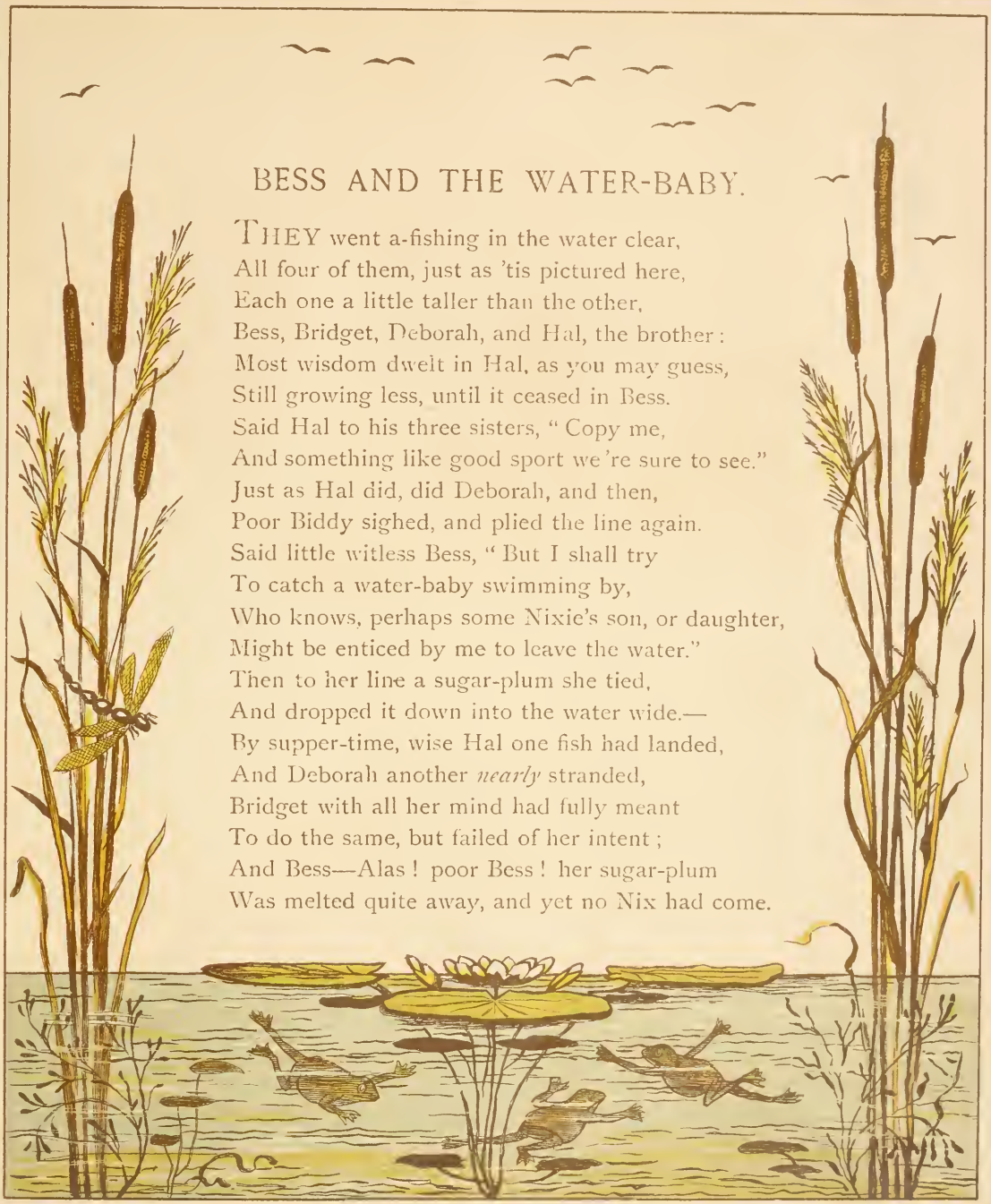
NURSE NINETTE.

NURSE Ninette has come to pray
For her master, far away

At the war: his little Claire
He has left in Nurse's care.

"Oh, that war!" thinks poor Ninette,
"Have they fought a battle yet?

"Should they kill the father there—
Ah, the child! poor little Claire!"



BESS AND THE WATER-BABY.

THEY went a-fishing in the water clear,
All four of them, just as 'tis pictured here,
Each one a little taller than the other,
Bess, Bridget, Deborah, and Hal, the brother:
Most wisdom dwelt in Hal, as you may guess,
Still growing less, until it ceased in Bess.
Said Hal to his three sisters, "Copy me,
And something like good sport we're sure to see."
Just as Hal did, did Deborah, and then,
Poor Biddy sighed, and plied the line again.
Said little witless Bess, "But I shall try
To catch a water-baby swimming by,
Who knows, perhaps some Nixie's son, or daughter,
Might be enticed by me to leave the water."
Then to her line a sugar-plum she tied,
And dropped it down into the water wide.—
By supper-time, wise Hal one fish had landed,
And Deborah another *nearly* stranded,
Bridget with all her mind had fully meant
To do the same, but failed of her intent;
And Bess—Alas! poor Bess! her sugar-plum
Was melted quite away, and yet no Nix had come.

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IN THE CORNER.

1.

ON the chair an open lesson,
Open wide at A B C;
In the corner little Lettice,
Aged three.

2.

Little Lettice is not stupid,
She can learn if she will try;
Knows her A B C as well as
You or I.

3.

But to-day she really would not
Think of anything at all
But those flowers—and the china
On the wall.

4.

When to big A Mother pointed,
Saying, "Letty, *this* you know:"—
Letty looked and quite sedately
Said—"Round O!"

5.

This is why our little Lettice
In the corner there you see,
Till it pleases her to know her
A B C.





OLD-FASHIONED FLOWERS.

YES, I think him a prince among flowers.
Mr. Hollyhock, handsome and tall;
And I think, too, for brightness of colour,
Miss Poppy the queen of them all.

But I don't let them know that I think so,
For—it strikes me again and again—
Mr. Hollyhock 's slightly conceited,
Miss Poppy 's a little bit vain.

Now a snowdrop or daisy—the darlings!
I might praise them for ever, I know,
And neither the one nor the other
The least bit conceited would grow.

But as for these others, 'tis really
More prudent this only to say:—
"I 'll trouble you, please, for a flower,
And then I will wish you good-day."

BLACK DIANA.

1.

SEE Nellie on the garden seat,
Intent on giving Jack a treat :
First, something nice for Jack to eat.

2.

Next, Nellie says, in accents low,
"Jacky, if you would like to go,
And hop about an hour or so,



3.

"There 's nothing here that you need fear:
Diana 's lying curled up near,
But she 's asleep—she cannot hear."

4.

"Indeed? don't be too sure of that,"
Says to herself, Black Di, the cat,
"I know precisely what you 're at!"

5.

You think you 're very clever, Di,
Can you explain the reason why
Jack won't come out ; is he too shy ?
Jack knows Diana—that is why.

MISS RHODA.

"HERE'S a garden?" Of course. "And two butterflies?" Yes.
"And a dog and a girl?" Undoubtedly so.
"But then what is she looking at?" Well, we must guess;
For, to tell you the truth—I really don't know!

'T is not night, so she can't be star-gazing afar;
Or straightway the tale I should certainly tell,
Of the man who walked on with his eyes on a star,
Until at the last he fell into a well!

But what else can it be, then? A kite up on high,
Belonging, it may be, to Robert or James?
Or a nest on a tree? Or a lark in the sky?
Or is it the smoke from a chimney in flames?

"Why not ask her herself?" you suggest. Very well:
But first, with your leave, I will venture to say,
If we wait till it pleases Miss Rhoda to tell,
I think we shall wait here the whole of the day!



AU REVOIR

AND now 'tis time to say Good-bye
To all our friends; and, with a sigh,
We shut the door. So, close the book—
'Tis the last page on which you look.
We hope you've had a pleasant time
With us, our pictures, and our rhyme;
And, if you 'll come another day,
And bring your friends—of course you may—
Whatever time you like to come,
You're sure to find us here, "At Home."



FAREWELL

TO all who love the little folk,
Their little ways, their little talk ;
Who love to watch the children's ring ;
To see them laugh, to hear them sing :
Of high degree, of low degree ;
At home, abroad, across the sea :
Where'er an English book may go,
Our English children's ways to show
In mem'ry of their childish times,
We dedicate this book of rhymes.

